

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/633,216

Examiner

Daniel L. Greene

Applicant(s)

HEINEMANN ET AL.

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 10/08/2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 2-4, 7, 10, 11 and 19.
3. ☐ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☒ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☒ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 11/30/2004.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with John Kramer on 11/30/2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[1]] 19 wherein said rule data are ~~comparison statements~~ stored in a rules database.
3. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[1]] 19, wherein said payment data includes financial data for input to an accounting system of the billable party.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 19, wherein said payment data includes electronic funds transfer (EFT) data.
- 5-6. (Cancelled)
7. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[1]] 19, further comprising the steps of:

generating a summary message specifying a billing data total amount to be paid; and automatically electronically notifying said billing party of said summary message.

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8-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 19, further comprising the step of providing interactive computer screens so that said billable party supplies analysis data for inclusion in billing data analysis reports.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein said analysis data includes case budget data including total case time, case hours, case costs, hourly rate, and case difficulty.

12-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for automatically processing billing data generated by a billing party for payment for services provided to a billable party, said method comprising the steps of:

automatically obtaining billing data in an electronic format from the billing party, said billing data including a listing of the specific tasks undertaken by the billing party as part of the services rendered to the billable party, wherein: the listing includes a plurality of single time billing entries each representing time spent by a billing party staff member in performing one of the specific tasks or a portion thereof; and the single time billing entries are identified by billing codes representing the specific tasks undertaken by the billing party as part of the services rendered;

automatically comparing said billing data with rule data defined by said billable party, wherein a portion of the rule data relates to assessing the single time billing entries for the specific tasks undertaken by the billing party as part of the services rendered to the billable party; and

automatically authorizing generation of payment data if said billing data satisfies said comparison with said rule data[[.]] , wherein:

the rule data comprises a plurality of warning rules and a plurality of error rules;

the step of automatically comparing the billing data with the rule data comprises the sub-steps of, if the billing data fails to satisfy any of the error rules: ceasing further evaluation of the billing data; and automatically electronically notifying the billing party that the billing data failed to satisfy the error rules, without automatically authorizing generation of payment data; and

the step of automatically authorizing generation of payment data comprise the sub-steps of:

if the billing data satisfies all the warning rules and error rules, automatically authorizing generation of payment data according to the billing data; and

if the billing data satisfies all the error rules but not all the warning rules: automatically authorizing generation of payment data according to the billing data; and automatically electronically notifying the billing party that the billing data failed to satisfy the warning rules.

20. (Cancelled)

As per claim 19, the closest prior arts of record, Crooks et al. U.S. Patent 5,943,656, Brown U.S. Patent 5,875,435 and Landry U.S. Patent 5,956,700 taken

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either individually or in combination with other prior art of record fails to teach or suggest if the billing data satisfies all the error rules but not all the warning rules, automatically authorizing payment and notifying the billing party that the billing data failed to satisfy the warning rules.

The specific allowable feature, which distinguishes the present invention over the prior art is if the billing data satisfies all the error rules but not all the warning rules, automatically authorizing payment and notifying the billing party that the billing data failed to satisfy the warning rules. The prior art halts the transaction if any irregularities are noted.

Claims 2-4, 7, and 10-11 are dependent upon Claim 1 and thus have all the limitations of claim 1 and are allowable for that reason.

Conclusion

2. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
3. 3,852,571 12/1974 Hall et al.
4. 4,485,300 11/1984 Peirce
5. 4,701,601 10/1987 Francini et al.
6. 4,734,564 3/1988 Boston et al.
7. 4,484,304 11/1984 Anderson et al.
8. 4,799,156 1/1989 Shavit et al.
9. .


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Daniel L. Greene whose telephone number is 703-306-5539. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Thur. 8am-6pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James P. Trammell can be reached on 703-305-9768. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

12/08/2004

DLG



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